

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3545

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB,PINT, IT

SUBJECT: WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR -- ROME MEETING

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. THE WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (WCL) IN END OF FEBRUARY MEETING APPROVED THE ENTRY OF ITS EUROPEAN AFFILIATES (EO/WCL) INTO THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC) ON THE BASIS OF INDIVIDUAL APPLICATIONS. MEETING ALSO CONSIDERED WAYS OF EXCHANGING INFORMATION IN ORDER TO BETTER DEAL WITH THE PERCEIVED THREAT OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS. A JOINT WCL/ICFTU MEETING ON MULTINATIONALS WAS TO BE HELD MARCH 2 IN GENEVA. FINALLY, WCL CRITICIZED LATIN AMERICAN JUNTAS AND THEIR SUPPRESSION OF TRADE UNION FREEDOMS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE WCL CONFEDERAL BOARD MET IN ROME FEBRUARY 25 TO MARCH 1 TO DEAL WITH INTER ALIA THE MODALITIES OF AFFILIATION WCL EUROPEAN

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MEMBERS TO THE ETUC AND TO PREPARE FOR A JOINT WCL-ICFTU MEETING ON

MULTI-NATIONAL CORPORATIONS. THE CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF ITALIAN WORKERS (ACLI) WHICH IS AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF THE WCL, HOSTED THE MEETING.

3. AT THE MARCH 1 PRESS CONFERENCE THE CONFEDERAL BOARD DECLARED ITS FULL APPROVAL OF THE EO/WCL POSITION IN FAVOR OF JOINING THE ETUC. ACLI LEADERS TOLD EMBOFF THAT DECISION REACHED RELUCTANTLY BY SOME BOARD MEMBERS AND TAKEN WITH TREPIDATION OFOR FUTURE OF WCL. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, EO/WCL SEC GEN KULAKOWSKI AFFIRMED THAT EUROPEAN WCL AFFILIATES WOULD ENTER THE ETUC ON THE BASIS OF INDIVIDUAL APPLICATIONS, MOST OF WHICH SHOULD BE COMPLETED FOR MARCH 7
ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING. THERE WAS NO MENTION OF A TIME TABLE FOR EO/WCL DISSOLUTION.

4. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS NO PUBLIC MENTION OF THE EFFECT THAT EO/WCL ENTRY INTO THE ETUC MIGHT HAVE ON EVENTUAL CGIL AND CGT ADMISSION, SOME MEMBERS OF THE CONFEDERAL BOARD PRIVATELY STATED THIS WEEK THAT CHRISTIAN ENTRY WOULD BOLSTER THOSE FORCES OPPOSED TO CGIL AND CGT MEMBERSHIP. KULAKOWSKI, WHEN QUERIED BY EMBOFF, STATED THAT NEITHER WCL NOR EO/WCL HAD AN OFFICIAL POSITION RE CGIL OR CGT ENTRY.

5. IN ADDITION TO DEALING WITH ETUC QUESTION THE WCL CONFEDERAL BOARD DISCUSSED AN ACTION PROGRAM TO DEAL WITH MULTI-NATIONAL CORPORATIONS. ONE PRIORITY IS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INFORMATION BANK FOR EXCHANGE OF DATA ON MULTINATIONALS. A PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN TO ACQUAINT WORKERS WITH NEGATIVE ASPECTS THESE CORPORATIONS WOULD ALSO BE UNDERTAKEN. CONCOMITANT WITH THESE STEPS AND AS AID TO ACTION AGAINST MULTI-NATIONALS THE WCL CALLED FOR AN INTENSIFICATION OF TRADE UNION UNITY AT ALL LEVELS, WITH DUE REGARD TO

DIVERSE LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES. WCL RESOLUTIONS ON MULTI-NATIONALS PRESUMABLY FORMED THE BASIS FOR JOINT DISCUSSIONS OF THE WCL AND ICFTU EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES WHICH BEGAN MARCH 2 IN GENEVA. WCL SEC GEN BRUCK SAID MARCH W MEETING WAS EVIDENCE OF VERY POSITIVE EVOLUTION IN WCL/ICFTU RELATIONS. BRUCK ALSO POINTED OUT THAT WCL HELD MEETINGS WITH WFTU AT SECRETARIAT LEVEL FROM TIME TO TIME, BUT HE DOWNPLAYED IMPORTANCE THESE GATHERINGS.

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6. RESPONDING TO A PRESS INQUIRY ON THE TRADE UNION SITUATION IN LATIN AMERICA WCL ASST. SEC GEN FOR LATIN AMERICA GONZALEZ BLASTED THE ORIT FOR "WORKING WITH THE MILITARY JUNTA IN CHILE IN SETTING UP A LABOR ORGANIZATION". MEANWHILE THE WCL ACCORDING TO GONZALEZ QS IN CONTACT WITH THE CUT(CH) IN LIMA AND ATTEMPTING TO TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION AS PART OF THE CHILE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE. GONZALEZ ALSO BRIEFLY DISCUSSED THE SUPPRESSION OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS IN URUGUAY AND BOLIVIA.

7. COMMENT: WCL MEETING WENT LARGELY UNNOTICED BY ITALIAN TRADE
UNIONS AND PUBLIC. MARCH 1 PRESS CONFERENCE ALSO SPARSELY
ATTENDED. OF COURSE JOURNALISTS THEN PREOCCUPIED WITH GOI CRISIS.
LOW VISIBILITY SUITED ACLI WHICH NOT EAGER EMPHASIZE ITS WCL RELATION-

SHIP AT A TIME WHEN IT CONCENTRATING ON RECOVERING ITS NATIONAL ROLE
IN TANDEM WITH THE CISL. AT SAME TIME ACLI DESIRED ROME MEETING IN
ORDER LOBBY WITH WCL FOR SUPPORT SOME KIND OF ACLI SPECIAL
RELATIONSHIP OR STATUS WITHIN AN EXPANDED ETUC. VOLPE

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